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ABSTRACT

This report describes the attrition rate at Johnson County Community College (JCCC) (Kansas). The overall attrition rate for classes starting in fall 2000 was nearly 12%--during the fall semester 4,652 students dropped classes. Useable drop surveys were completed for 93% of those classes. Findings indicated that: (1) the Science, Math, and Health Care divisions recorded nearly a 16% attrition rate, the highest of all the academic divisions; (2) the Physical Education division recorded the lowest attrition rate (9%); (3) the most frequently cited reasons for dropping a class were work schedule conflicts (24%) and personal problems (19%); (4) "course difficulty" and "poor grades" accounted for 17% of the drops, 27% in the Science, Math, and Health Care divisions; (5) "course difficulty" and "dislike of instructor" were more significant factors in students dropping a high attrition class--one with an enrollment of 10 or more students and an attrition rate of 40% or higher--than a regular class; (6) more than 33% of the students dropping a Computer Instruction and Media Resources division high attrition class cited the instructor as one of the reasons they dropped; and (7) more than half of the classes were dropped in November, the last month students were eligible to drop a class. (JCC)

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JCCC Drop Study/ Attrition Rates Fall 2000

Office of Institutional Research

March 2001

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JCCC DROP STUDY/ATTRITION RATES

FALL 2000

Office of Institutional Research
Johnson County Community College
Overland Park, Kansas
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March 2001

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INTRODUCTION

Each fall, the Office of Institutional Research conducts a survey to determine the reasons JCCC students drop classes. The survey is administered throughout the semester by the Admissions Office at the time each drop request is processed. The following report details the results of this study for the fall 2000 semester. **Only those classes that start on or before the 20th day have been considered for detailed analysis in this report.** Actual attrition rates for fall 2000 classes starting on or before the 20th day are also provided, together with tables detailing results by academic division. The comments added to the survey by the students are published separately as a supplement to this report.

Requests for the supplement of verbatim comments, as well as questions and comments pertaining to this study should be directed to:

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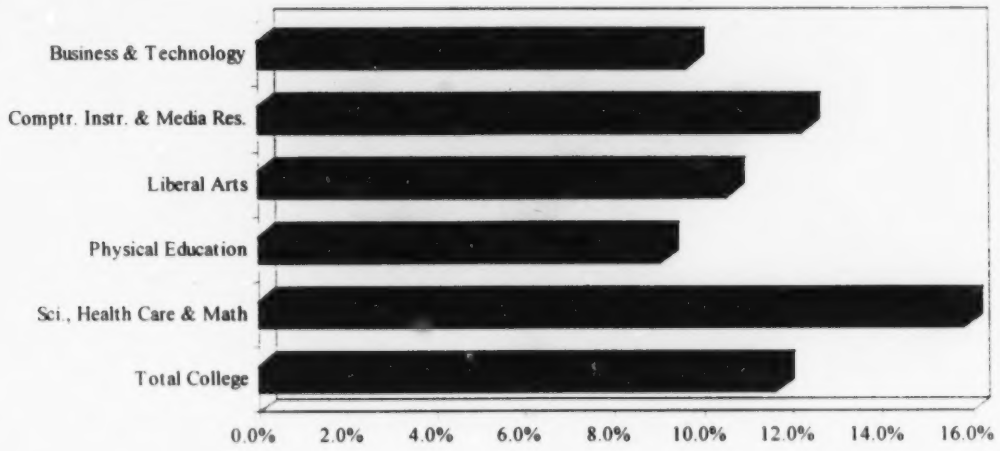
The overall JCCC attrition rate for classes starting on or before the 20th day of the fall 2000 semester was nearly 12%. During the fall semester, 4,652 students dropped classes. Useable drop surveys were completed for 4,340 of those classes (93%).

The Science, Health Care, and Math Division recorded nearly a 16% attrition rate, the highest of all the academic divisions (see Table 1). The Physical Education Division recorded the lowest attrition rate (9%).

Figure 1
ATTRITION RATES BY DIVISION FALL 2000



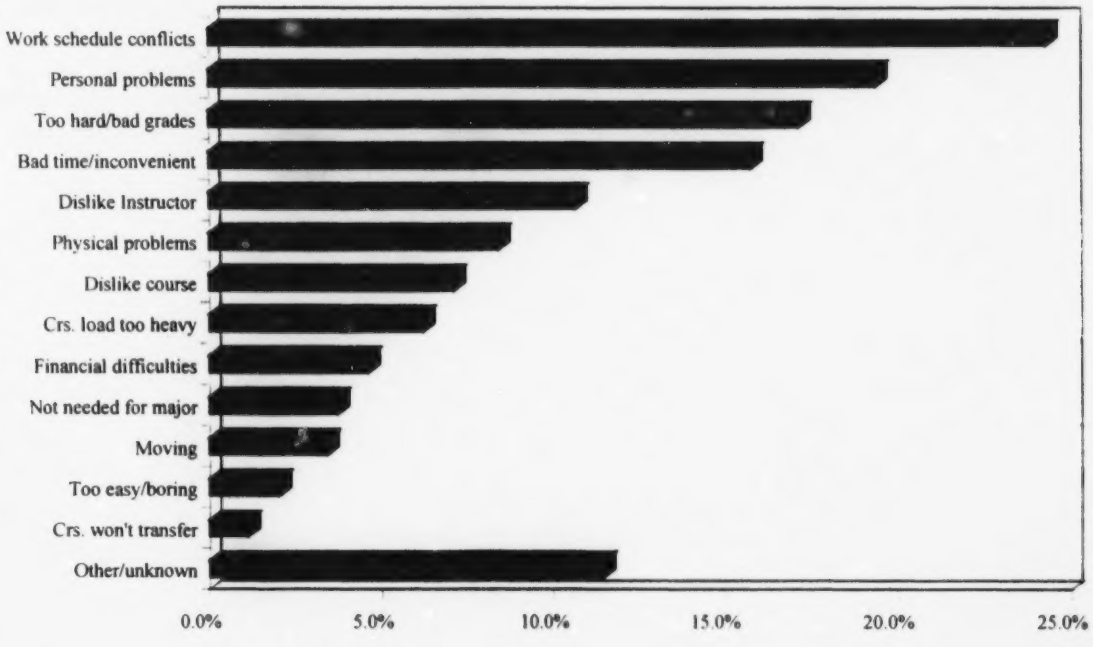
REASONS FOR DROPPING A CLASS

The most frequently cited reasons by students for dropping a class continue to be *work schedule conflicts* (24%) and *personal problems* (19%). Both are factors over which JCCC has little control. With the exception of the Science, Health Care and Math Division, *work schedule conflicts* was the most frequently cited reason for dropping classes in all divisions. It was a particular problem for students dropping a Computer Instruction and Media Resources class with 33% citing this reason (see Tables 2 and 3).

Reasons over which JCCC may have some control such as course difficulty, course scheduling, and instructors appeared to contribute to decisions to drop classes in a substantial number of instances.

- *Course too hard/bad grades* was the third most frequently cited reason for dropping a class overall (17%), and the most frequently cited reason in the Science, Health Care and Math Division (27%).
- *Bad time/inconvenient* was cited by nearly 16% of the respondents as a factor in their decision to drop a class, but 24% of those dropping a Physical Education class cited this reason.
- Nearly 11% of students cited *did not like the instructor* as a contributing factor in their dropping a class. Less than 2% of students dropping a Physical Education Division class cited this as a reason.

Figure 2
REASONS FOR DROPPING A CLASS FALL 2000



HIGH ATTRITION CLASSES

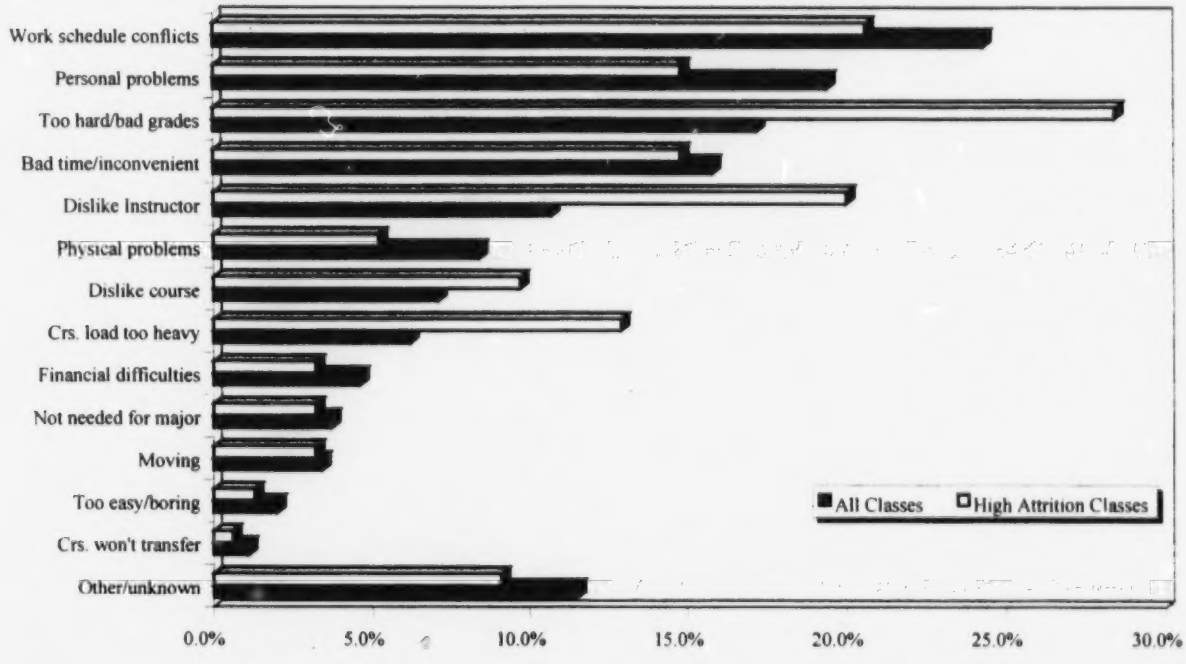
A high attrition class is defined as a class with an enrollment of 10 or more and an attrition rate of 40% or higher. Of the classes offered in the fall semester, less than one percent were high attrition classes (see Table 4). The Science, Health Care and Math Division reported the largest percentage of high attrition classes (2%).

Course difficulty and not liking the instructor were more significant factors in students dropping a high attrition class than for dropping classes as a whole.

- *Too hard/bad grades* was cited by 28% of students dropping a high attrition class compared to 17% for students dropping classes as a whole.
- *Did not like the instructor* was cited by 20% of students dropping a high attrition class compared to nearly 11% for students dropping classes as a whole. Over 33% of the students dropping a Computer Instruction and Media Resources Division high attrition class cited the instructor as one of the reasons they dropped the class. (See Tables 5 and 6).

Of the 19 high attrition classes for the fall 2000 semester, 63% were taught by full-time faculty (see Table 7).

Figure 3
COMPARISON OF REASONS FOR DROPPING CLASSES FALL 2000



Month in Which Classes Were Dropped

More than half (53%) of the classes were dropped in the month of November (the last month students were eligible to drop a class). (See Table 8).

Figure 4
MONTH CLASSES WERE DROPPED FALL 2000

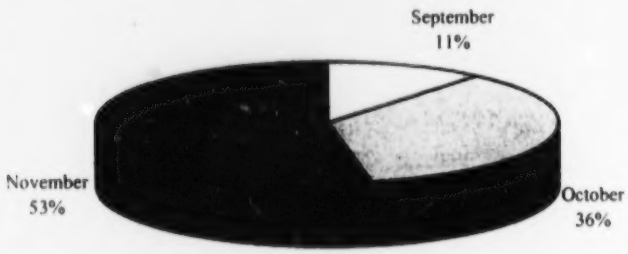


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Table 1

ACTUAL ATTRITION RATES FOR CLASSES STARTING ON OR BEFORE THE 20TH DAY BY ACADEMIC DIVISION FALL 2000[1]

	Number Enrolled	Number Dropped	Percent
Business & Technology Division	7,719	737	9.6%
Computer Instruction & Media Resources Division	3,297	403	12.2
Liberal Arts Division	18,118	1,901	10.5
Physical Education Division	1,933	173	9.0
Science, Health Care & Math Division	9,073	1,436	15.8
Dean	12	2	16.7
College Total	40,152	4,652	11.6

[1]Duplicated headcount.

Table 2

REASONS FOR DROPPING A CLASS FALL 2000[1]

	Number (n=4,340)	Percent
Work schedule conflicts	1,055	24.3%
Personal problems	842	19.4
Too hard/bad grades	747	17.2
Bad time/inconvenient	687	15.8
Did not like instructor	465	10.7
Physical problems/illness	366	8.4
Did not like course	310	7.1
Courseload too heavy	271	6.2
Financial difficulties	200	4.6
Not needed for major	162	3.7
Moving	146	3.4
Too easy/boring	86	2.0
Course won't transfer	49	1.1
Other	264	6.1
Unknown	233	5.4

[1]Multiple response item; percentages are not additive.

Table 3

REASONS FOR DROPPING A CLASS
BY ACADEMIC DIVISION
FALL 2000[1]

	Number	Percent
Business & Technology Division	(n=685)	
Work schedule conflicts	191	27.9%
Personal problems	115	16.8
Bad time/inconvenient	108	15.8
Too hard/bad grades	79.	11.5
Physical problems/illness	60	8.8
Did not like instructor	52	7.6
Did not like course	45	6.6
Courseload too heavy	37	5.4
Not needed for major	29	4.2
Financial difficulties	28	4.1
Moving	28	4.1
Too easy/boring	12	1.8
Course won't transfer	4	0.6
Other	57	8.3
Unknown	38	5.5
Computer Instruction & Media Resources Division	(n=367)	
Work schedule conflicts	121	33.0%
Bad time/inconvenient	60	16.3
Did not like instructor	51	13.9
Too hard/bad grades	51	13.9
Personal problems	44	12.0
Did not like course	29	7.9
Financial difficulties	29	7.9
Courseload too heavy	22	6.0
Physical problems/illness	22	6.0
Too easy/boring	9	2.5
Not needed for major	7	1.9
Moving	6	1.6
Course won't transfer	4	1.1
Other	25	6.8
Unknown	27	7.4

[1]Multiple response item; percentages are not additive.

Table 3 (continued)
REASONS FOR DROPPING A CLASS
BY ACADEMIC DIVISION
FALL 2000[1]

	Number	Percent
Liberal Arts Division	(n=1,770)	
Work schedule conflicts	416	23.5%
Personal problems	403	22.8
Bad time/inconvenient	310	17.5
Too hard/bad grades	247	14.0
Did not like instructor	223	12.6
Did not like course	150	8.5
Physical problems/illness	144	8.1
Courseload too heavy	111	6.3
Financial difficulties	86	4.9
Moving	73	4.1
Not needed for major	67	3.8
Too easy/boring	40	2.3
Course won't transfer	16	0.9
Other	103	5.8
Unknown	75	4.2
Physical Education Division	(n=159)	
Work schedule conflicts	49	30.8%
Bad time/inconvenient	38	23.9
Physical problems/illness	33	20.8
Personal problems	16	10.1
Not needed for major	10	6.3
Did not like course	8	5.0
Financial difficulties	6	3.8
Courseload too heavy	5	3.1
Too easy/boring	5	3.1
Too hard/bad grades	3	1.9
Did not like instructor	2	1.3
Moving	1	0.6
Course won't transfer	0	0.0
Other	8	5.0
Unknown	9	5.7

[1]Multiple response item; percentages are not additive.

Table 3 (continued)
REASONS FOR DROPPING A CLASS
BY ACADEMIC DIVISION
FALL 2000[1]

	Number	Percent
Science, Health Care, & Math Division	(n=1,350)	
Too hard/bad grades	366	27.1%
Work schedule conflicts	275	20.4
Personal problems	264	19.6
Bad time/inconvenient	169	12.5
Did not like instructor	136	10.1
Physical problems/illness	106	7.9
Courseload too heavy	95	7.0
Did not like course	78	5.8
Financial difficulties	51	3.8
Not needed for major	49	3.6
Moving	38	2.8
Course won't transfer	25	1.9
Too easy/boring	20	1.5
Other	71	5.3
Unknown	82	6.1

[1]Multiple response item; percentages are not additive.

Table 4

HIGH ATTRITION CLASSES[1]
FALL 2000

	Total Classes	High Attrition	Percent
Business & Technology Division	526	1	0.2%
Computer Instruction & Media Resources Division	220	2	0.9
Liberal Arts Division	1,099	6	0.5
Physical Education Division	91	0	0.0
Science, Health Care, & Math Division	505	10	2.0
Dean	1	0	0.0
College Total	2,442	19	0.8

[1]Defined as classes with an enrollment of 10 or more and an attrition rate of 40% or above.

Table 5

COMPARISON OF REASONS FOR DROPPING ALL CLASSES WITH REASONS FOR DROPPING HIGH ATTRITION CLASSES[1]
FALL 2000

	All Respondents (n=4,340)	High Attrition Class Respondents (n=155)
Work schedule conflicts	24.3%	20.6%
Personal problems	19.4	14.8
Too hard/bad grades	17.2	28.4
Bad time/inconvenient	15.8	14.8
Did not like instructor	10.7	20.0
Physical problems/illness	8.4	5.2
Courseload too heavy	6.2	12.9
Financial difficulties	4.6	3.2
Not needed for major	3.7	3.2
Moving	3.4	3.2
Too easy/boring	2.0	1.3
Course won't transfer	1.1	0.6
Other	6.1	3.9
Unknown	5.4	5.2

[1]Multiple response item; percentages are not additive.

Table 6

COMPARISON OF
REASONS FOR DROPPING ALL CLASSES WITH
REASONS FOR DROPPING HIGH ATTRITION CLASSES
BY ACADEMIC DIVISION[1]
FALL 2000

	All Respondents	High Attrition Class Respondents
Business & Technology Division	(n=685)	(n=11)
Work schedule conflicts	27.9%	9.1%
Personal problems	16.8	9.1
Bad time/inconvenient	15.8	0.0
Too hard/bad grades	11.5	54.5
Physical problems/illness	8.8	9.1
Did not like instructor	7.6	27.3
Did not like course	6.6	9.1
Courseload too heavy	5.4	9.1
Not needed for major	4.2	0.0
Financial difficulties	4.1	0.0
Moving	4.1	9.1
Too easy/boring	1.8	0.0
Course won't transfer	0.6	0.0
Other	8.3	9.1
Unknown	5.5	18.2
Computer Instruction & Media Resources Division	(n=367)	(n=12)
Work schedule conflicts	33.0%	25.0%
Bad time/inconvenient	16.3	25.0
Did not like instructor	13.9	33.3
Too hard/bad grades	13.9	0.0
Personal problems	12.0	16.7
Did not like course	7.9	0.0
Financial difficulties	7.9	8.3
Courseload too heavy	6.0	16.7
Physical problems/illness	6.0	0.0
Too easy/boring	2.5	0.0
Not needed for major	1.9	0.0
Moving	1.6	0.0
Course won't transfer	1.1	0.0
Other	6.8	0.0
Unknown	7.4	8.3

[1]Multiple response item; percentages are not additive.

Table 6 (continued)

COMPARISON OF
REASONS FOR DROPPING ALL CLASSES WITH
REASONS FOR DROPPING HIGH ATTRITION CLASSES
BY ACADEMIC DIVISION[1]
FALL 2000

	All Respondents	High Attrition Class Respondents
Liberal Arts Division	(n=1,770)	(n=46)
Work schedule conflicts	23.5%	17.4%
Personal problems	22.8	17.4
Bad time/inconvenient	17.5	23.9
Too hard/bad grades	14.0	23.9
Did not like instructor	12.6	19.6
Did not like course	8.5	17.4
Physical problems/illness	8.1	6.5
Courseload too heavy	6.3	10.9
Financial difficulties	4.9	6.5
Moving	4.1	2.2
Not needed for major	3.8	6.5
Too easy/boring	2.3	2.2
Course won't transfer	0.9	0.0
Other	5.8	4.3
Unknown	4.2	0.0
Physical Education Division	(n=159)	(n=0)
Work schedule conflicts	30.8%	
Bad time/inconvenient	23.9	
Physical problems/illness	20.8	
Personal problems	10.1	
Not needed for major	6.3	
Did not like course	5.0	
Financial difficulties	3.8	
Courseload too heavy	3.1	
Too easy/boring	3.1	
Too hard/bad grades	1.9	
Did not like instructor	1.3	
Moving	0.6	
Course won't transfer	0.0	
Other	5.0	
Unknown	5.7	

[1]Multiple response item; percentages are not additive.

Table 6 (continued)

COMPARISON OF
REASONS FOR DROPPING ALL CLASSES WITH
REASONS FOR DROPPING HIGH ATTRITION CLASSES
BY ACADEMIC DIVISION[1]
FALL 2000

	All Respondents	High Attrition Class Respondents
Science, Health Care, & Math Division	(n=1,350)	(n=86)
Too hard/bad grades	27.1%	31.4
Work schedule conflicts	20.4	23.3
Personal problems	19.6	14.0
Bad time/inconvenient	12.5	10.5
Did not like instructor	10.1	17.4
Physical problems/illness	7.9	4.7
Courseload too heavy	7.0	14.0
Did not like course	5.8	7.0
Financial difficulties	3.8	1.2
Not needed for major	3.6	2.3
Moving	2.8	3.5
Course won't transfer	1.9	1.2
Too easy/boring	1.5	1.2
Other	5.3	3.5
Unknown	6.1	5.8

[1]Multiple response item; percentages are not additive.

Table 7

HIGH ATTRITION CLASSES[1] BY INSTRUCTOR TYPE
FALL 2000

Division	No. High Attrition	Instructor Type			
		Full Time	Percent	Part Time	Percent
Business & Technology Division	1	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
Computer Instruction & Media Resources. Division	2	2	100.0	0	0.0
Liberal Arts Division	6	3	50.0	3	50.0
Physical Education Division	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Science, Health Care & Math Division	10	7	70.0	3	30.0
Total	19	12	63.2	7	36.8

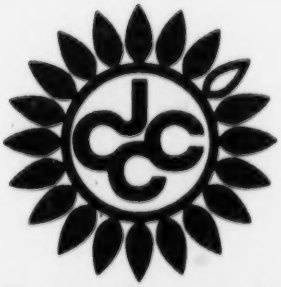
[1]Defined as classes with an enrollment of 10 or more and an attrition rate of 40% or higher.

Table 8

MONTH CLASSES WERE DROPPED[1]
FALL 2000

Month	Percent
September	11.2%
October	35.8
November	53.0

[1]Classes that started on or before the 20th day of the semester.



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